

# **INFLUENCES ON NUTRITIONAL PRACTICES AND WELLNESS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN**

## **Psychological, Cultural and Social Influences on Food Choices Grade Levels: 7-12**

**Concept:** Food Security and Hunger

**Comprehensive Standard:** 6.1 Analyze the factors that influence nutritional practices and wellness across the lifespan

**Technical Standard(s):**

- 6.1.2 Explore the societal, governmental, socio-economic, and technological influences related to food choices and practices
- 6.1.3 Examine the impact of food choices on the global community

**LESSON COMPETENCIES:**

- ? Define food security, food insecurity, hunger and other related terms (MS,HS)
- ? Identify possible causes of food insecurity and hunger (MS, HS)
- ? Examine issues related to food insecurity and hunger (HS)
- ? Explore meal planning for families below the poverty level (HS)
- ? Discuss possible solutions to the problem of domestic and world hunger (MS, HS)

**Anticipated Behavioral Outcomes:**

- ? Students develop an awareness of domestic and global issues related to hunger and poverty.
- ? Students research some of the many factors that contribute to food insecurity and hunger in the United States and around the world.
- ? Students take action in their local communities to address these concerns.

**Resources Needed:**

- Calculators
- Food ads from local grocery stores
- Copies of handouts for all students
- Copies of the Food Guide Pyramid
- Copies of the Food Stamp Eligibility Limits available at [http://frac.org/html/federal\\_food\\_programs/programs/fsp\\_limits2002.html](http://frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/fsp_limits2002.html)

**References for teachers and students:**

- America's Second Harvest* at <http://www.secondharvest.org>
- Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger* (<http://www.feedingminds.org>) This project was initiated by a group of international and non-governmental organizations that have joined forces to help eradicate hunger and malnutrition through education. A free curriculum of the same name is available for primary, intermediate and secondary students.
- Food For Everyone* (<http://www.agedhq.org/ffe/index.html>) This site offers a free curriculum on hunger focused on the agriculture industry.

*Know Hunger* (<http://www.knowhunger.org>) This site has a free curriculum on hunger in American and around the world.

Newsweek magazine has an educational presentation on World Hunger available at their website at <http://209.238.148.232/extras/hunger.php>

Federal poverty guidelines are updated each year and can be found at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/search/poverty/03poverty.htm>

For information on Food Stamp Eligibility limits and other Federal Food Assistance programs, see the *Food Research Action Council* site <http://www.frac.org>

A pamphlet outlining the food stamp program *Facts About the Food Stamp Program* and how to order hard copies of the pamphlet can be found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp>

### **Background Information:**

The world's population is currently around 6 billion people and is expected to climb to 8 billion people by 2025. Consider the following information from the United Nations briefing report on Poverty (2001). For the entire report, visit the following website:

(<http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/poverty/pvoverview.htm>)

### **Facts on World Hunger:**

- ? More than 2.8 billion people, close to half the world's population, live on less than the equivalent of \$2/day.
- ? More than ½ billion people or about 20% of the world's population, live on less than the equivalent of \$1/day.
- ? Nearly 1 billion people are illiterate
- ? More than 1 billion people do not have access to safe water
- ? The top fifth (20%) of the world's population have access to 86% of the world's wealth. The bottom fifth, in the poorest countries, has about one percent.

### **Facts on Hunger in America:**

A 2001 study by *Second Harvest* entitled *Hunger in America 2001* (<http://www.secondharvest.org>) found the following:

- ? About 26 million people in the U.S. rely on emergency services to obtain food (soup kitchens, food pantries, charities, etc.)
- ? Of these 26 million people, 75% have incomes under \$10,000, only 35% are employed and 60% have been on food stamps for one year or more.
- ? Nearly 40% of the households that received assistance in 2001 included an adult that was working
- ? Almost 11% were seniors (over age 65)
- ? More than 9 million children are recipients of food from a food pantry, kitchen or shelter in the Second Harvest network.
- ? Nearly half (47%) of all emergency food recipients lived in rural or suburban areas of the country NOT cities.
- ? Nearly half of hungry Americans (45%) have to choose between paying utilities or buying food. More than 35% choose between buying food and paying their rent or mortgage.

**NOTE to TEACHER:** Another excellent fact sheet called *Hunger Facts* can be found at the Kids Can Make A Difference website; a teacher's guide, *Finding Solutions To Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference*, with 25 lessons on hunger and poverty can also be ordered at this site.

<http://www.kidscanmakeadifference.org/hunfa.htm>

**Food Insecurity** - Most American families are “food secure” – they have assured access, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy lifestyle. But many families in the United States (about 10%) and around the world are “food insecure” – they are uncertain of having or unable to acquire, adequate food sufficient to meet this basic need at all times due to inadequate household resources for food. This might be due to low wages, unstable employment or unemployment, or drought and famine.

**WORLD FOOD DAY** – World Food Day is celebrated every year on October 16 as an effort of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to raise public awareness of the world's hungry and malnourished and to encourage people to take action against hunger. This unit could be introduced at that time and/or school activities could be planned that focus on domestic and global issues related to food insecurity and hunger.

### **Learning Activities:**

#### **Middle School Level**

- ? Review terms related to hunger and food insecurity. Use the transparency master, *Terms to Know*. Discuss the following questions:

#### **Hunger –**

- How many of you have ever been hungry?
- How did it feel to be hungry?
- How long was it before you were able to get some food to satisfy your hunger?
- How would it feel to eat one meal a day – a bowl of rice and some water?
- How many days could you survive?
- How would this impact your work at school, your activities, your family?

#### **Food Security/ Food Insecurity**

- Do you think all families in the United States are food secure?
- Do you think all families in South Dakota are food secure?
- Do you think all families in our community are food secure at all times?
- How would you know if a family were struggling with having enough food? (Show pictures of children and adults and ask if you could recognize those who are not getting enough food)
- What do families do if they do not have enough food?
  - \* go to a food pantry
  - \* go to a soup kitchen

- \* go hungry or adults eat less so that children can have more to eat
- What resources does South Dakota have to help these families?
  - \* Food Stamps program
  - \* food pantries
  - \* Women, Infant and Children program
  - \* The Banquet (Sioux Falls ) or other food kitchens
  - \* reduced school lunches and/or breakfast programs
- What do you think are socially unacceptable forms of getting food in our community?
  - \* begging
  - \* going through garbage
  - \* going to a food pantry?
  - \* accepting charity?
  - \* going to a food/soup kitchen
  - \* stealing
  - \* accepting food stamps?
  - \* other
- Why might some people not seek help if they do not have enough food for their families?
  - \* pride
  - \* not aware of help
  - \* other

### **Malnutrition**

- What are the signs of malnutrition?
  - Are only low income families malnourished?
  - How could someone be getting enough food and still be malnourished?
- ? Using the transparency master, review the *Health Consequences of Hunger*
- ? Complete the activity *Thanksgiving Shopping Cart*. Ask students to calculate the cost of the average Thanksgiving dinner in the United States. Provide food ads from the local newspaper for students. Read the article “*Less Than \$1 Means a Family of 6 Can Eat*” available from at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&node=&contentId=A30110-2002Feb18> Calculate how many days income for families living in third world countries are included in the cost of this one meal in the United States. Plan a Thanksgiving dinner for a low-income family.
- ? Complete the activity *Relying on Rice*. Discuss what countries rely on rice as the primary staple food.
- NOTE TO TEACHER: To increase the effectiveness of this activity, prepare a bowl of brown rice to show students what a one cup serving of brown rice would look like.
- ? Use the FCCLA Planning Process to plan a project related to hunger and food insecurity. See suggestions listed in the Extended Activities section of this unit.

### High School Level

- ? Prepare the *World Continents Game* activity. Hand out tickets as students enter the room. Follow directions as outlined on the activity sheet.
- ? Students complete the pre-test/*Quiz on Poverty and Hunger*. Discuss responses and provide students with correct answers.
- ? Review terms related to hunger and food insecurity. Use the transparency master, *Terms to Know* and *Health Consequences of Hunger*. Ask similar questions to those for middle school age group.
- ? Complete the *Meal Planning on A Limited Income* activity. Using the federal poverty guidelines and the food guide pyramid, plan one week's menus for individuals and families that are nutritionally adequate for family members and are within budgetary limits.

### Extended Activities:

\***Feast or Famine?** The directions for this activity are included. This activity could be completed by members of the class or by FCCLA members. It is very effective when completed close to the Thanksgiving holiday. It could be included as part of National Family Week/Month activities.

\***Food Drive** – FCCLA chapter hold a food drive to collect food items for the local food pantry or some other organization collecting food for those in need. Cans of food can be used for a reduction in admission price for a sporting event or other school event.

\***Community Sharing: Gleaning** – This activity is a community wide event to glean fruits and/or vegetables left in fields, gardens and orchards after harvest.